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1920







Edelweiss and Alprose
and
Other Poems
by
Ida Stieler



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Dedicated to the Spirit

of

ANDREAS HOFER

Gift

Author

OCT 14 1920

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ANDREAS HOFER.

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EDELWEISS AND ALPROSE.

Two mountain blossoms, white and red,
I used to pluck many a time;
Oft with them did I crown my head
And all around a gladness spread
In homeland while in life's sweet prime.

As Edelweiss the first is known,
Queen of the Alps is she by right;
Life-risking boldness had I shown
Whenever I wished her to own
Defying all perils of height.

The red one is the Rose of Rocks,
From crevices of crags she greets, —
Her bells hang from bushy stocks
Accosting shepherds with their flocks
When at twilight the crowd she meets.

The same blossoms the hillfolks proud
Brought as gifts to soldiers brave
To deck their helmets with cheers loud,
While from the village they marched out
From tyrant's grasp homeland to save.

These flowers of Tirolese land,
The symbols of virtue and might,
On heroes' graves with grateful hand
I will strew, and in prayer stand
For souls who fought for country's right.

ANDREAS HOFER

O greatest of our martyrs! rise again,
Our wounded hearts scream to the Lord in pain,
Turn to life from that lofty marble stand,
And feel the grasp of each Tiroler's hand!

In the woes of death our folks agonize,
To thee with hopes they raise their tear-stained eyes,
Come down from Iselberg, may thy grand call
Be a war-herald's trumpet to us all!

Wake, lover of thy people! and inspire
Every youthful soul; let thy voice like fire
Kindle each and all hearts to one huge flame
That may the freedom of mountains proclaim!

THE RANGER'S HOUSE

Along the mossy forest glade
Stand pines erect in youthful bloom,
Old willow trees for years have made
Their lonesome home in woodland gloom.

Wild rose heaths in their bosom hide
The cozy little ranger's cot,
Pruned shrubs a fancy fence provide,
A Bernard dog watches the spot.

Antlers' horns the wooden house adorn,
The garden glows with carnations red,
Green shades shut out the sun at morn
From spinning on walls the golden thread.

Stuffed birds and squirrels are here seen
And skins of foxes side by side
And heads of deer with eyes cut clean, —
In all these rests the hunter's pride.

Breezes are borne on evening's wings,
Rustling reeds are covered with dew,
Perched on alders the wood-thrush sings,
The landscape wears a novel view.

The pale moon sheds her gloomy light
That peeps through twigs on chequered way,
Magic lamps shine in glow-worms bright
And guide folks home at close of day.

The night clothes with darkness tender
The hunter's home with all its charms,
And pines and firs all so slender
Sleep in nature's loving arms.

HOME THOUGHT OF A TIROLER

O might I be in my homeland again!
Where to the edelweiss the folk heart clings,
Where the hues from rose-hills in cloudland dwell,
Where childhood's playmate is the meek gazelle,
And the peasant the deeds of Hofer sings!

Up to the mountain heights how would I climb!
How would I greet the Alpine world once more,
And wear on my back the knapsack again,
Sporting with rocks in sunshine or in rain,
And hear the tempests through the valleys roar!

Might I wander over bright glacier fields
And tune the soul with the eternal snows
That in waving peaks reproduce the sea,
Foamy-crested white when storm rages free,
And shed on glassy hills crystal rainbows!

Might I lie quiet on turfy green wayside
And look into the sparkling deep blue lakes
Which mirror forth every ice-crowned hill,
Leafy vales where sheep in flocks nibble still,
And wind-driven clouds that run like wild snowflakes!

Might I saunter through upland groves,
Listening to the notes of the nightingale,
How would I count the cuckoo's twofold call,
And follow the songs of the waterfall
That feeds hundred rills beneath the dale!

Might I visit dear remembered places
Out in the recess of pine forests deep,
Where every tree its friendship proclaims
And every bench bears old comrades' names
And homely breezes balmy currents keep!

BROKEN TOYS

Far away my restless thoughts do fly,
Swiftly rushing through the amber sky,
Far away to a snow-clad mountain-top,
Where they find a peaceful place to stop.

Far away, where the breeze's touch is cold,
Their wings they warm in the sunset's purest gold,
Far way, under fir trees wrapped in snow,
They seek for my joys of long, long ago.

Far away, where my rocky homeland lies,
Hush, hush, they go like little fireflies,
Far away, through forests young and green,
Where they gather buried dreams unseen.

Far away, over meadows' tinted floors,
Yet they find my childhood's fancy doors,
And greet its heavenly visions and joys
And merrily play with old broken toys.

THE FOREST CHAPEL

Between many a slumb'ring pine and fir
The small white forest chapel sweetly peeps;
No turmoil is here, nobody astir—
Here where Solitude her kingdom keeps.

Twilight draws near, silence rules woody shades,
Birds are now ceasing to chirp and hover,
The freshness of delicate blossoms fades,
A bewitching calm prevails all over.

Hearest thou the bells touchingly ringing?
They call the passers-by to evening prayers,
The sweet gong-gongs are steadily bringing
Pensive moods of devotion in layers.

In darkness rests the holy shrine within,
Only the "eternal lamp" shines at spots;
The pilgrim crosses the threshold serene,
In hand a boquet of forget-me-nots.

At the altar's foot he offers the flowers
And up to heaven his prayer he sends,
Thanking heartily for this solemn hour
That at last to homeland his journey tends.

The night comes on, and the stars, one by one,
Are shining down on earth so clear and bright;
O lovely forest shrine! when can I run
Homeward as pilgrim and have thee in sight?

A HOMESONG

Under the leafy willow I sat and from afar
I heard a tender homesong played on a guitar,
And a tremendous longing crept in my young heart
For my mountain village, from which I had to part.

O heavenly song! thou bringest joyous greetings
From primal Alpine life and plain shepherds' meetings,
From primrose that encircles the edelweiss star,
From jackdaws that build their nests on the woodland
scar.

O wonderful song! thou speakest of golden hours
In rose-shrouded huts and ivory-laced bowers,
In dells where the lily of the valley grows,
On glacier peaks diademed with age-long snows.

O friendly song! thou breakest the strange land's hard
ice,
And liftest the veil through which peeps my paradise,
Far away wherein the years full of blossoms bright
Went by like a continuous streamlet of light.

O glorious song! ring on through the silent wood,
Thy words of love I have feelingly understood;
Skywards thy sounds raised me with enrapturing
charms,
And eager to hold thee close I extend my arms.

When the last note has satisfied my heart's wild desire
And the query seems to come from the silent lyre
To my inmost being: "Do you still love Tirol?"
Tears drop from my eyes while I cry with heart and
soul.

TO THE EDELWEISS

O stainless edelweiss,
Shining silver star,
Thy chosen paradise
Snowy mountains are,
Where as queen thou reignest in regions wide and far.

A robe of spotless white
Falls in simple grace
Down delicate and bright;
Dew-drops thee embrace
Sparkling on thy gown and on thy bridal face.

The morning sun's first kiss
Is for thy pale lips
A never-ending bliss,
Into thy heart he dips
And with lover's burning fire thy juicy soul sips.

Murmuring winds create
Pleasant melodies,
At thy dwelling's high gate
Sings the Tirolese
Songs of woodland and blue sky in deep harmonies.

The night's noiseless sky
Carries thee fair dreams,
While through the clouds on high
The ling'ring moon beams
Drink full thy sleeping beauty in silver streams.

Rivulets as they glide
Send thee a slumber-song,
And cloud-doors open wide
For the stars that long
To have thee, their lost sister, in their dancing throng.

ALPINE MEMORIES

The Alpine flowers which have lain for years
Within the book of my sweet souvenirs
Bring back to me the sounds from pine-clad hills, —
I hear the tinklings that the cow-bells make,
And the hunter's shots that the forest shake,
And deep melodies from splashing rills.

O little blossoms, mountain treasures small,
How often in my life do ye recall
The past! and I forget the present day,
Borne by ye on memory's golden wings,
Playing on flying vision's charming strings,
And dreaming myself in fancies away —

To the time when I a highlander bright
Stood on the morn of life watching the light.
Use once more, Fancy, thy magic powers,
Thou sweetest friend to mankind, rich and poor,
Link me up with the happy days of yore
Which time has garnered in her rolling hours.

Carry me again through the rainbow gates
That clouds build on hills and pine colonnades;
Let me see the arches painted on high,
See them doubled down in the river clear,
And watch the sunball with the mountaineer
Dropping at dusk between slopes from the sky.

Guide me walking across the gorges steep
While I look down the frightening chasm deep,
Where rhododendrons illumine the walls;
I would hear blue willow gentians speak,
Greet the edelweiss on the cloud-swept peak,
Responding to the white narcissus's calls.

CHILDHOOD'S SOUVENIRS

Come, my love, with me across the sunburnt plain
Over the waving carpet brown and green,
Sing to the birds and join in their refrain,
That melting music behind the twilight screen!
See, my love, the sunset of my childhood gay,
With silver streamlets laughing here and there,
And feel flower-secrets from the wild woods gray
Borne by butterflies through the mountain air,
While my young heart still takes part in their joy
and pain!

Come, my love, follow me through the darksome lane,
Where glow-worms were my lamps, red, green and
white,
Brightening the mossy path with a golden chain,
But to blow those lights out was my delight!
See, my love, the evening weaves us garlands
And the forest monarch, the great oak tree,
Shakes refreshed his rain-drenched knightly hands
And sprinkles on our heads the pearl-drops free
While my young heart still takes part in their joy
and pain!

CASTLES IN RUINS

Up in the cliffy heights of hillside rocks
Stand relics of castles of knightly stocks,
Where tempests work havoc all day;
Replete with legends of the life of old,
Of joyous banquets memories they hold, —
Of festal young maidens with hair of gold
And smiling cavaliers gay.

The black battlements tell us the story
They have witnessed here of ancient glory
In woodland manorial halls;
Exposed long to the heaviest showers,
Can still be marked the half-destroyed towers,
And despite the seasons' changeful powers
Flourish the ivy-mantled walls.

Dark as are shadows between tree spaces,
The ruins mount guard here in frozen paces
All devoid of hope, lifeless, alone;
No more are they in splendor and in light,
Gone are the golden ages of the knight,
And all that is left over of their might
Is but bewildered blocks of stone.

Frightful horrors today loom up again
Of innocent travelers robbed and slain
In these blood-stained dungeons cold;
The weatherbeaten walls are steep and gray,
Scattered like tombstones on craggy way,
They bespeak the sudden passing away
Of the manners of barons bold.

The green moss carpets still the mountain floor,
Its pathway upwards it makes to the door
That once opened to chambers grand;
But vanished have trophies of diverse modes,
Many an animal seek their abodes, —
Moles, vultures and hounds have replaced the codes
That had governed the markgraf's land.

No more do the stones feel the rhythmic gait
Of haughty horsemen or pages of state
As they set out to watch alarm;
The music of the harp is heard no more,
Dumb is the minnesinger's race of yore
Who charmeth the soul with chivalrous love lore
In silver moonlit evenings warm.

Nobody now disturbs nocturnal quiet,
Only the shriek of the owl breaks the night
Among the frigid stony mass;
Bizarre and gloomy are the sounds on high,
And the gusts of winds wail and fly
Through broken palisades that seem to cry
Over heaps of feudal carcass.

FAREWELL TIROL

Farewell, farewell, O Alpine ranges mine,
Thou youthful fir, thou lovely silverpine,
I must wander in a land far from thee
Where hill-belted cities I may never see.

Farewell, farewell, thou mystic solitude,
Ye charming cattle chimes, thou cowherd's flute,
Ye glacier peaks, thou evening sky so red,
Thou brightly colored mountain flower-bed.

Farewell, farewell, ye peaceful pastures calm,
Thou woodland quiet, thou perfect nature's balm,
Ye grazing cattle, thou sweet shepherd song,
Thou foamy little Sill that prattles along.

Farewell, farewell, thou springing chamois brown,
Thou edelweiss, dressed in a silver gown,
Ye clear echoes from highland girls and boys,
Ye pretty birds with melting trilling voice.

Farewell, farewell, clefts belabored with snow,
Thou rocky labyrinth in morning glow,
Ye hillfolks, and ye peasants from the dale,
Alpine huts and cottages in the vale.

Farewell, farewell, thou dearest country mine,
Worshipped and loved by all the children thine;
I will be true to Hofer and his land,
When far away by the cool ocean's strand.

THE THRESHOLD

Between the ocean and the sky
You and I
Did we stand one cold autumn night
Without light;
One lustrous star watched from above
Our sweet love,
And the pale moon came from the east
To the feast.

Heaven lit the lamps for the hall
One and all,
How they flickered in the brisk air
Here and there!
And sonorous winds with power
In that hour
Blew trumpets full of joy and pride,
None replied;
But on the flute a Neptune's maid
Solos played,
And we listened to the steady
Melody.

A spritely nymph arose and spread
On our head
Odors from the sea's prickly smell,
Then she fell
Back in her foamy dark blue bed
Just like dead,
And the wavelets danced with delight
All in white.

Mermaids from the ocean deep
Tried to peep
As we clasped our arms one moment
Without end;
Slowly they cast their magic veil
On the sail,
And we passed into hands of fate,
Heaven's gate.

TO THE WANDERER

O silent, wand'ring bird! wilt thou return
With homeward flowing current to thy nest?
Then fly, and cross the raging ocean's breast;
May the moist-cool breezes like scented fern
Fan thee and soothe thy wings and feet that burn!
Break the sun's arrows and the cloud's white chest,
Tame roaring tempests, laugh at their unrest;
Sing at morn and eve while on thy sojourn,
Sip the fragrance from chrysanthemums fair;
Bathe in silver waters of pine-girt springs,
Rest on willow branches in mid-day glare,
Enjoy the twilight that evening brings.
At length, with rapidity cut the air
Until back in thy nest repose thy wings.

MESSAGE FROM THE STAR

Thy guiding star, yes, thy most loving call
It heard, while with the crowd it walked the ways
Above. Now the earth's commands it obeys
In orbit fixed. Don't call it dim or small
Nor dark this narrow track of mud and wall;
New life is goldened by love's sunny rays.
Through the revolving seasons thy star stays
With thee. Thy soul is its great temple hall
In which it hangs alone to glorify
Thy aspirations with eternal light.
Thou foundst thy world in the star; from on high
It fell into thy heart; thus it replied.
Yet to all it is a star in the sky
Who wanders with its sisters side by side.

MY GARDENER

On the sea-shore, where the waves with hands cold,
Took thee from me, did I stand; in a veil
Of clouds the boat moved on with the strong gale;
My hope died with the sunrays' last deep gold.
I cried: "Come back, come back!" O pain untold,
It is too soon to leave me and to sail.
O blossoms, strangers yet in my heart's dale,
Should ye have to wither at love's threshold?
While they are lying asleep through dark years
Their petals closed I shall caress, and sing
Until thy return; then with boundless cheers
Greet thee, the gardener, my beloved king,
Adorning thy head with a wreath of tears
Gathered in lonesome hours spring after spring.

CREATIONS

In woodland's mossy heart,
Bathed in bright sunshine,
From throng and crowd apart
The youth seeks a design,
Sketching a knightly tree, girt by a creeping vine.

On the winding river's brink
Where the sun's hot rays
Deep into water sink,
He outlines his ways
With the melted gold which the narrow glen displays.

In deepest forest rows,
Where dusk mantles the lea
And the twilight grows
Breaking through the tree,
He draws a silver spider frolic and free.

Where water roses float
By greenish-yellow light,
He paints a fishing boat
Which alabaster-white
Swims on the lake like a swan in his princely might.

Where the ocean is laced
With mauve grayish sand,
Or where sheep-folds are placed
Near the pale green highland
He creates new pictures for his never-resting hand.

AUTUMN

Faded roses I saw dying,
Joyless shone the crescent moon;
Woodland singers I heard sighing,
Southward they must wander soon.

Fallen leaflets I saw scattered,
Madly running husky and dry;
All the fruits and grains were gathered,
Through the fields I heard a cry.

On bare branches I saw shiver
Sweetest birds with languid voice;
Swarms were flying past the river,
Warmer nests arrest their choice.

Meadows green were rudely striven,
Lyreless lay the forest halls;
And my thoughts were sadly driven
To a heart that lonesome calls.

ON READING BROWNING'S "STILL ONE MUST
LEAD SOME LIFE BEYOND"

I.

Once in my strollings through the wooded hills
I found fragrant needles of pines
Like toys of the wind or like dishevelled hair
Flown about and laid low to the ground
As a thick carpet to soften the forest floor.
Lovely butterflies were there,
Spreading their wings to sip
Eagerly the honey from flowers' tender lips.
The path led into a valley where first the sun appears,
The meadows were all alive,
Birds charmed with songs the ears,
A flock of sheep, led by the shepherd boy, passed by,
While a swarm of wood-cocks in turmoil flew around.
The ground was sown with crops of diverse hues,
They formed a gay quilt of colors rich,
And the sparkling dew-drops like jewels shone
In the morning of that summer day;
Trees, fruit-laden, mounted guard all along the way.
And then at the end suddenly afar
A new forest I espied.
With wondering eyes I gazed, and full of joy I cried:
"O, another woodland beyond!"

II.

When dawn crept up from the eastern sky,
And one by one the stars began to pale,
At the call of the breaking day,
Awoke the slumbering birds and flowers.
I stood on the hanging mountain peak,
And saw the sun shooting up,
And the winged creatures on flight enjoying the breeze;
The green grass glistened under the morning's first
kiss.
I heard the shrill cry of a springing gazelle;
It was the signal to a frightened herd.
I watched them climbing the hill-way- up,
And then down the precipice they went
To the other side.
I followed the timid animals and crossed the path
And rose to the summit,
And lo! my eyes were arrested by
Another hill-range beyond.

III.

When the train puffed through tunnels dark
And left behind plateaus and valleys,

My eyes were greeted by novel sights,—
 No more the heights,
 All level regions, endless plains,
 Town after town;
 No dancing rivulets I found, but rivers large,
 Vineyards green at the castle's foot,
 And the smoke rising from factories huge.
 Another pull, another sight,—
 The folks were carrying on their shoulders broad
 Large cans of water to drink,
 And the streets resounded to their wooden shoes.
 I watched the wind-mills by the canal side,
 And grassy glades and cows all brown.
 But lo! not far appeared again
 Church spires, chimneys and throngings crowds,
 And I heard whistles calling labor to rest,
 And I cried in wonder:
 "Another city beyond!"

IV.

In foreign lands, across the chalky sea,
 I was treated to manners new
 And forgot the very sound of my mother-tongue.
 Again at length I reached the roaring ocean's strand,
 With its banks of sand, arrayed like steps of stone,
 All dry and white.
 The sky was dark in evening light,
 I watched the little sails trembling in the air
 And saw the boatmen clinging to their ship
 As a baby to the mother dear.
 One vessel carried me through stormy waves,
 Necklaced by the raving foam of dark blue brine.
 Days and nights I counted
 Upon that Noah's ark,—
 A motley human hive, a babel of tongues,
 Conveying loves and woes, worries and dreams,
 Such as the children of Adam have ever felt.
 Then one morning the white sea birds flew around
 our deck,
 And all at once from sea life the thoughts
 Turned in expectant mood
 To another land beyond!

V.

Oft in my infancy I was amazed to know
 That the hours were rolling by in a regular row,
 How I watched one night follow the other in punctual
 way,
 And after a dozen hours the night pass into day!
 But soon, with the turning of the wheel,
 The day closed a month,
 And when the month had gone twelve times
 The year was o'er,

Leaving recollections bright and sad
And dreams of joys to come.
As the cycle started afresh,
How often did I fondly cry
With memories and hopes:
"Another year beyond!"

VI.

Today, by the cozy fireside as I sit and peruse
The book of men and women's stories
And on their life I muse,
I count their failures, successes, disappointments and
crowning glories.
Their breath vitalizes me with a thrilling touch;
With joy I tremble and feel
Life indeed must be such,—
A conquest of the unknown,
A rush into the present,
Into the future a dive, a deep discontent,
A craving for something new.
And as I watch the struggling souls
Creating hopes and fears that the world heeds not,
How am I startled to discover
That each one of the race bears the divine spark
That urges to Paracelsus' and Sordello's tasks,
That every man and woman revolts with Promethean
rage
Against repression, injustice and impoverishment of
heart!
Then as deeper into life's process I search,
In agreeable surprise I am happy to find
That nothing but the stream of infinite fire
Could have pushed mankind on so far,
And I conclude
That all of us have been leading another life beyond!

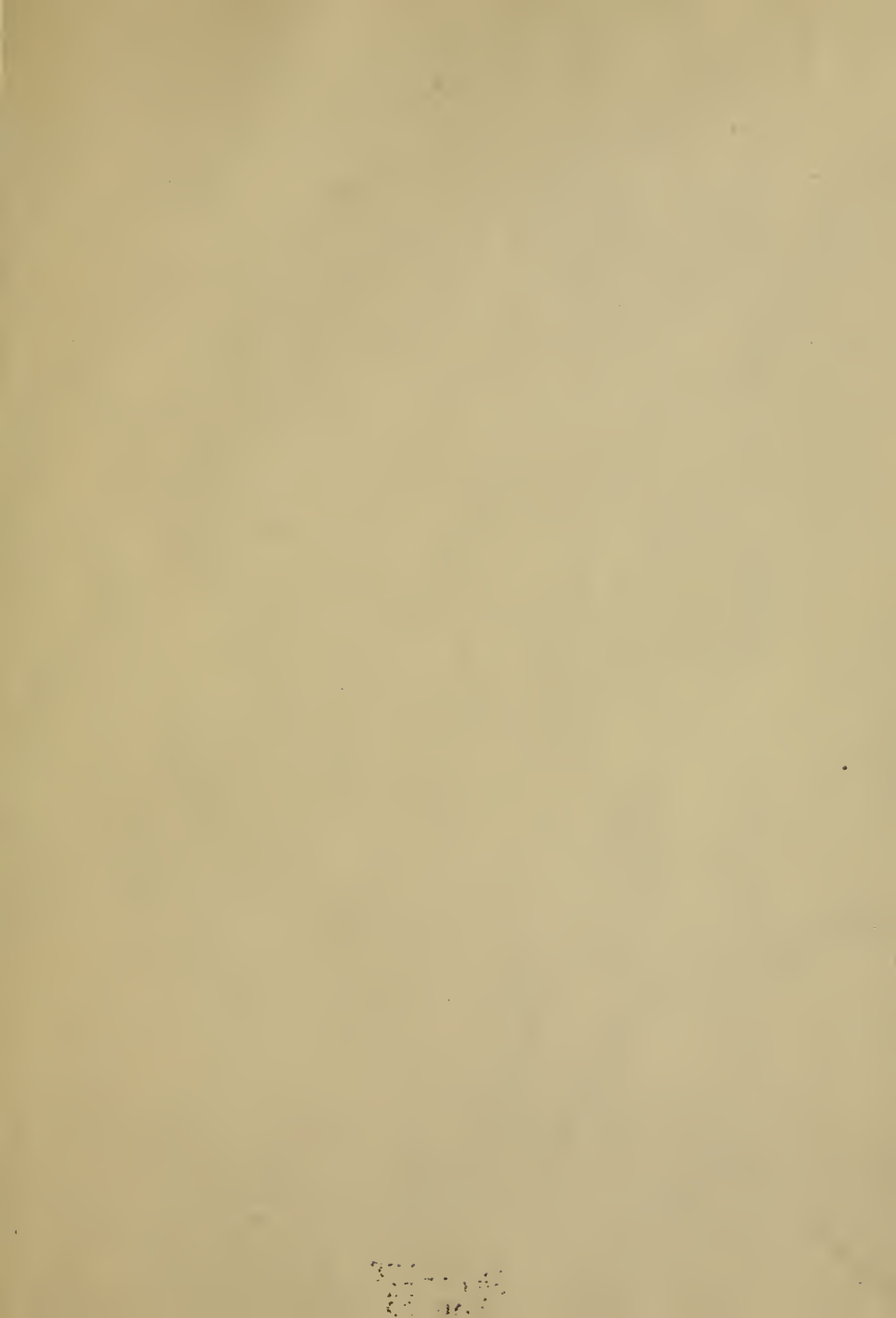
SPRING TIME

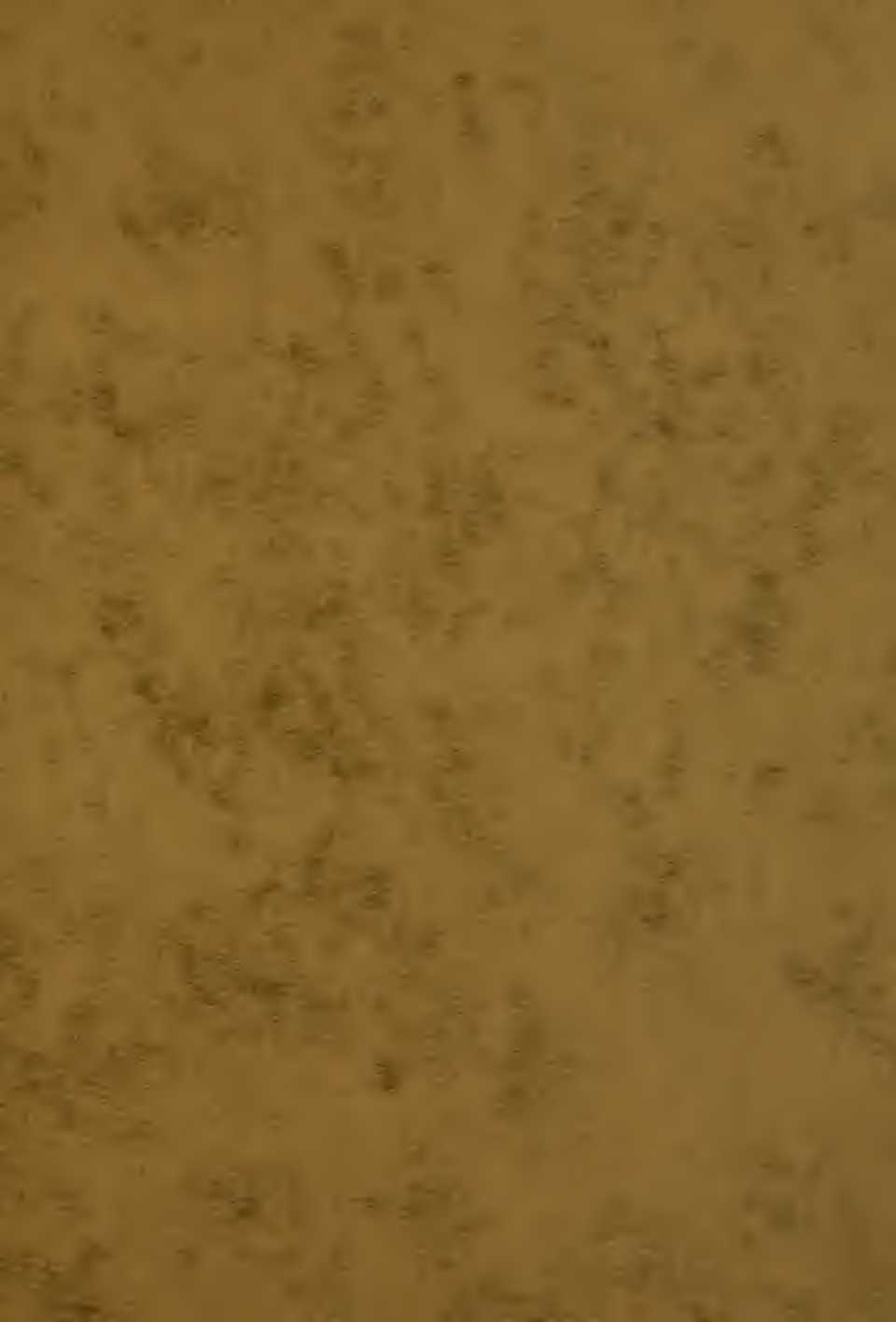
Awake, awake, it is springtime's silver dawn!
Hear the call, o slumbering snow-drop white,
Thy tiny eyes will greet the grassy lawn,
The freshening plains, the new sparkling light.

Awake, awake, it is springtime's rosy birth!
Ye nightingale and lark, with loudest strain
Sing to the world amidst the flower-mirth
That young life grew out of the old again.

Awake, awake, it is springtime's youthful morn!
Rise and dance with the budding yellow sprays,
Tie with sun-lace ribbons the breezes newly born,
And wind them around the roses on pathways.

Awake, o heart, once more spring has her prime!
It was in springtime that love to thee came, —
Thou wert quickened to life by Easter chime,
All rosebuds opened wide; who can thee blame?









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